

**NEPAL**

**Statement by Mr. Sudhir Bhattarai, First Secretary and member of the delegation of Nepal, on Agenda item 56 (a) Advancement of Women, and 56 (b) Implementation of outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, and of twenty-third special session of the General Assembly at the Third Committee of the sixty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**(New York, 14 October, 2008)**

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to extend its sincere thanks to the Secretary General and his staff for the preparation of comprehensive reports on these agenda items.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of G-77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

We are appreciative of the fact that significant achievements have been made in setting norms and standards on the protection and promotion of rights of women, especially after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Good progress has been achieved especially in integrating the gender perspective into the development agenda worldwide. Important treaties have been concluded for ending discrimination against women. But much remains to be done, particularly for the full and effective implementation of these commitments internationally.

Nepal attaches strong significance to advancement of women. The historical political and social transformation, including the declaration of Nepal as a federal democratic republic, has created new opportunities for the advancement of women in Nepal. Our Constituent Assembly is one of the most-inclusive assemblies in the world; with a greater representation of people from various ethnic and geographic regions. About one third of its members are women. These elected representatives of the people are engaged in the process of writing a new constitution of Nepal bringing about the logical conclusion to the nationally-owned peace process in the country.

Nepal has adopted the right-based approach for social, economic and political empowerment of women. The Interim Constitution of Nepal guarantees the civil liberties and fundamental freedoms of the people, including the rights of women, depressed communities and marginalized groups. Nepal accords high priority to poverty alleviation, girl's education, health, women's access to

economic resources, political and social empowerment and elimination of gender discrimination.

Nepal has made significant progress on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. We have made provisions for equal property and citizenship rights to women and for representation of women on at least one third of the elected bodies and for ensuring proportional and inclusive representation of women in all organs of the state, including the government bureaucracy, through the implementation of the phased-wise programs.

The recent policies and programs of the government attaches full adherence to the promotion of women's rights, gender equality and economic, social, cultural and political empowerment of women at all levels. The government has adopted a gender-responsive budget Initiative, which takes into account the advancement of women in the programmes launched by the government in all sectors.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal is a party to most international human rights instruments related to the rights of women. As a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol, Nepal has been submitting its periodic reports on the implementation of these instruments. We are of the view that the United Nations system should increase its technical assistance to its member states, especially to the least developed countries, for the implementation of the human rights instruments for empowerment of women.

Nepal has taken several legal, administrative and other policy measures for an end to all forms of discrimination and violence against women. Sexual harassment is subject to strong punishment in Nepal. A Women Cell has been established under the Nepal Police to curb domestic violence against women. Human Trafficking Control Act has been enacted to stop trafficking of women and children.

While abolishing the patriarchal social structure and ending all forms of discrimination against women, the Government of Nepal is committed to put in place an arrangement to take strong action against criminal offences such as physical exploitation, domestic violence and trafficking against women.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal believes that the United Nations can play significant role for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, especially leading by example. We support the proposals for effective gender architecture in the United Nations. We emphasize strong gender architecture of the United Nations at regional and country levels.

The Millennium Development Goals reinforced more investment to the development of women. The financing for gender equality and empowerment of women is the most important aspect of development of women. When we review financing for development in Doha later this year, financing for gender equality and empowerment of women should be given high priority.

Finally, we feel that gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women should have collective commitment and efforts at the United Nations. The International community should chart out its collective course towards further strengthening the promotion of gender equality and elimination of gender discrimination with a comprehensive strategy with concerted and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.