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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

866 Second Avenue, 3rd Floor • New York, N.Y. 10017

## Statement

By Woinshet Tadesse

Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of  
Ethiopia

On the Agenda Item 28

Advancement of women:

At

The 65th Session of the United Nations General  
Assembly Third Committee

Check against delivery

New York  
October 2010

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**Mr. Chairman;**

At the outset my delegation would like to express its profound appreciation to the Secretary-General for the reports before us on the agenda item under consideration. My delegation would also like to associate itself with the statement made by the delegation of Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Mr. Chairman;**

It has been fifteen years since the international community came together and adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which is the basic global policy framework for the full realization of gender equality, women's human rights and the empowerment of women and girls. We are pleased to note that the significant progress has been achieved in the area of policy development at national, regional and international level. There is also encouraging development in the area of education with increased access for women and girls at all levels.

However, there are still remaining gaps and challenges that demand our collective actions and commitments. It is very disappointing that there are still discriminatory laws against women in different parts of the world. The representation of women in decision making has remained below the target of 30 percent. There are discrepancies between available legislation and its implementation. Majority of women still live under poverty, in low-paid jobs and without social security. The progress achieved in the area of reproductive health is very limited and maternal mortality remains the major challenge in many developing countries. Moreover, negative attitude and gender

stereotypes have hindered progress towards gender equality and empowerment of women. Worldwide women are subject to different forms of violence and discrimination. Non-traditional forms of violence including inter-alia trafficking in women and girls, abduction, and rape have become global phenomena. Thus, greater political will and leadership both at national, regional and international levels becomes imperative to increase resources and implement policies and strategies geared towards gender equality and empowerment of women.

**Mr. Chairman,**

In this connection, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation for the establishment of UN Women to enhance UN efforts to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. My government welcomes the appointment of Ms. Michelle Bachelet, as head of UN Women and it is my delegation's strong belief that with her wise leadership and commitment the UN Women will be capable of delivering on its responsibilities. We look forward the establishment of the executive board of the UN Women taking into account balanced geographical representation.

**Mr. Chairman;**

Ethiopia recognizes the crucial importance of continuing to take concrete actions aimed at improving the situation of women all over the country. In this regard, several policy and legislative measures have been undertaken with a view to curbing all forms of discrimination against women. The Ethiopian Federal Constitution recognizes women's equal rights and accords them full legal rights to participate in the political and economic decision-making processes. As a result, the

numbers of women in decision-making and leadership roles have increased considerably.

The Government of Ethiopia has also taken a number of practical measures to improve women's access to basic and maternal health services. Similarly, efforts have been made to increase the enrollment and retention rate of girls and women in all levels of education. The government has been taking a number of initiatives to ensure women's rights to own properties and improve their livelihoods. Under the food security programme, more attention has been given to women particularly for female-headed household in providing extension packages.

In an effort to eliminate violence against women and ensure the respect for their rights before the law, the Family Law and the Penal Code have been thoroughly revised. Accordingly, perpetrators of various forms of violence against women, such as rape and abductions, among others, may receive rigorous punishment. In line with the revised penal code, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), rape, abduction and trafficking are considered as serious crimes that entail severe punishment.

In conclusion, **Mr. Chairman**, I would like to reiterate Ethiopia's firm commitment to gender equality and empowerment of women. I wish to reaffirm Ethiopia's dedication to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

I thank you.