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**Statement of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

**THIRD COMMITTEE – 65<sup>th</sup> SESSION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

***On Item (28)***

***Advancement of Women***

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Delivered by

***Ms. Aseil Al-Shehail***

*Mr. President*

In the beginning, allow me to start by extending my sincere congratulations to you for your chairmanship of this Committee; and to express our most sincere congratulations to you, your office and the esteemed members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Committee wishing them the best. Moreover, my Country also supports the statement given by the Delegation of Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

*Mr. President*

The Delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia commends the efforts of the United Nations in the empowerment and advancement of women, as well as the policy enforced by the Secretary-General H.E. Ban Ki-moon to ensure greater participation of women in the United Nations. The most important matter we are witnessing in the present time about the advancement of women is the establishment of UN WOMEN which is clear evidence on the accomplishments reached in the field of equality and women empowerment. I would also like to congratulate Ms. Michelle Bachelet for her new position as the Under-Secretary General of the United Nations wishing her the best.

*Mr. President,*

My country is of the view of women participation in the society. To this end, as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is deeply concerned with the women issue, the section of women and development stipulated that the plans concerning the development of Saudi women is an integral component of the general strategic plan that conforms to the magnanimous Islamic SHARIAA, especially in the fields of education, health, social....

services and participation in social development. This is because women are half of the society, and their contribution in the advancement of the social, political and economic development is important to effectuate their role in the development process. Several resolutions were adopted to guarantee women's effective participation in prospective development plans and national strategies. Several units and departments were established in all governmental bodies to provide services related to women empowerment and to prepare them for their anticipated role. In addition, several resolutions were adopted concerning their equality with men, such as equality in the career ladder and retirement as well as granting full rights in the fields of education, health, social services and social security benefits. Moreover, Saudi women participated in various fields with full support from the Kingdom's Government.

*Mr. President,*

Lately, the Kingdom witnessed a positive development in the woman's situation whether in the areas of education, employment or health. The Saudi Council of Ministers adopted a resolution that included a set of measures and procedures to strengthen the role of women in order to make a quantum leap in the patterns of their participation in the society. The Council instructed all government agencies that provide services related to women to establish women's units and sections as needed and required within a deadline not exceeding one year from the adoption of the aforementioned resolution.

The prominent role of the Saudi woman in the society was very well noted in many areas, namely:

- Appointment of women in diplomatic corps and their effective participation in political life;
- Participation of women in decision-making through their role as consultants in the SHURA Council (Eight women appointed to that Council);



- Participation of women in the elections and Board's membership of the Kingdom's Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the Kingdom. Worthy to be noted that a woman was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Jeddah Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Jeddah is the second largest city in the Kingdom). In addition to electing female engineers in the First Board of Directors of Saudi Engineers Saudi; and in the Council of Saudi Journalists.
- Participation of the Saudi woman in economic activities as they became businesswomen. Their role went beyond the national boundaries to reach the regional and international levels. The number of commercial registers (the foundation of a corporation) owned by Saudi businesswomen in 2009 was about 40,000 registers (an increase of 77% higher than the year 2007) and significantly increasing.
- Participation of the women in enriching the national dialogue side by side with men on women empowerment and their participation in social development.
- Participation of Saudi women in the media as journalists, broadcasters and writers. There are many women publications, some of which have been translated into other foreign languages; in addition to their participation in various cultural activities on the national and international levels.
- Participation of Saudi women in the Medical field. As doctors and nurses, they represent the larger portion of the staff working in public and private hospitals.
- Establishment of NGOs, successfully run by Saudi women, concerned with domestic violence and defending the rights of women and children.

*Mr. President,*

In the end I can only express my gratitude for giving me the opportunity to shed some light on some aspects of the Saudi women's life, as well as some of the Saudi Government efforts to promote the principle of shared responsibility, to develop the role of women in all aspects of life, ensure their rights and participation in decision-making at the political, social, cultural and economic levels.

*Thank you, Mr. President*