

THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SIXTY-SIXTH SESSION
THIRD COMMITTEE
AGENDA ITEM 28: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

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STATEMENT

by

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12 October 2011

Mr. Chairman,

Since this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor in the Third Committee, I would like to join others in congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your election. Also, I take this opportunity to assure you of the cooperation and full support of my delegation during the work of the ongoing session of our Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the reports prepared under this agenda item. We listened carefully to the interesting and informative presentations made on Monday. Last year, Mr. Chairman, we all commended the creation of UN Women as a composite gender entity created with the aim of addressing, more coherently and efficiently, the issues related to the empowerment of women and gender equality. Recognizing the need for sustainable and timely financing for UN Women activities, Serbia made a humble financial contribution to the core UN Women budget last year and will consider its yearly contributions in the future. My country expressed its interest in becoming a member of the Executive Board of UN Women in the coming years. We believe that by sharing our experiences on cooperation with UN Women, and previously UNIFEM, on the ground, we shall be able to contribute to the overall work of UN Women in shaping and implementing its policies and programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

As a State Party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol, Serbia is committed to its full and effective implementation. Last year, we submitted our combined Second and Third Report on the implementation of the Convention; it is due to be considered by the Committee in October next year. We highly appreciate the role of the Committee in considering the achievements, as well as the problems and shortcomings that continue to exist in the implementation of the Convention. We perceive the process of dialogue with the Committee and its subsequent conclusions and recommendations as a valuable tool and strong incentive for furthering efforts at the national level aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and enabling their advancement and empowerment at all levels and in all spheres of life.

Mr. Chairman,

During the last decade, Serbia has developed a solid strategic, legislative and institutional framework for promoting gender equality and advancement of women. In addition to the 2009 National Strategy for the Advancement of Women and the Promotion of Gender Equality for the period 2009-2015, another important document – the National Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of Domestic Violence - was adopted last April. The Law on Gender Equality and the comprehensive Law on Prohibition of Discrimination were adopted in 2009. There are numerous other laws on education, employment, health, persons with disabilities, family etc. that contain specific provisions on the prohibition of discrimination, including gender-based discrimination. Gender equality mechanisms have been set up at national, provincial and local levels. Recognizing the significance and importance of the implementation of UNSC resolution 1325 (2000) and all subsequent UNSC resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, the Government of Serbia adopted the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSC resolution 1325 in December 2010. The Political Council and the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Body were established to enable cohesion and a full and effective implementation of the resolution.

Mr. Chairman,

Much has been accomplished so far, but we are fully aware that much remains to be done. This relates to a full implementation of the existing laws and, in particular, to the improvement of the position and protection of human rights of vulnerable groups of women such as refugee and internally displaced women, Roma women and girls, women with disabilities, rural women etc. Let me assure you that, working together with the civil society and in close cooperation with relevant international organizations, my Government will spare no effort to eliminate discrimination and violence against women and foster further advancement and empowerment of women in its endeavour to achieve full gender equality.

Mr. Chairman,

Besides striving to achieve full gender equality at the national level, Serbia is committed to contributing to the advancement and empowerment of women worldwide. In today's world, information and communication technologies have been identified as a powerful empowerment tool for all, particularly in developing countries. The ICT can play a major role in contributing to the overall objective of fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals. However, by and large, the ICT sector continues to be male dominated. In order to contribute to the global efforts in the promotion of gender equality, Serbia, together with the International Telecommunication Union, initiated the creation of the "Global Network of Women Decision-Makers in Information and Communication Technologies" aimed at narrowing the digital divide between women and men. It is my pleasure to inform you that the Global Network of Women ICT Decision Makers was officially launched in the United Nations last February during the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me reiterate my Government's commitment to further advancing and empowering women, including through the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and full protection and promotion of human rights of women and girls, as well as its readiness for cooperation with regional and global international organizations in that regard.

Thank you.