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The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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**Statement
By
H.E. Ambassador. Mootaz Khalil
The Permanent Representative
of the Arab Republic of Egypt
to the United Nations in New York**

on behalf of the Arab Group

on agenda Item 28: "Advancement of Women"

Third Committee

New York, October 15, 2012

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Mr. Chairman,

The Arab Group emphasizes that enhancing the status of women is a fundamental pillar and an essential element for economic, social, and human development. We stress the importance of continuing efforts in all areas of women's empowerment, in order to improve their economic, social, and legal status, enhance their role in public life, and give them an active role in the efforts aiming at eradicating poverty, combating unemployment, and eradicating illiteracy in Arab societies, in accordance with the First and Second Arab Development Summits, held in Kuwait in January 2009 and in Sharm El-Sheikh in January 2011.

Mr. Chairman,

The League of Arab States established the Arab Women's Organization in Cairo in 2003, in recognition of the status that women occupy in Arab societies, the important role they play in the family, the basic cell of the Arab society and the commitment to enhance cooperation and coordination between the efforts, policies and plans of the Arab States, for improving and advancing the status of Arab women.

The Arab Women's Organization contributes in the promotion of Arab cooperation for developing the status of women, and strengthening their role in society; raising public awareness on Arab women's issues in their economic, social, cultural and legal aspects; exchanging experiences on the advancement of women; mainstreaming women's issues in the priorities of the overall development plans and policies; developing women's potentials, building their capacity to contribute actively to their community's institutions and participate in decision-making; and the advancement of health and educational services necessary for women.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the achievements made by women around the world, they still face many challenges in the fields of employment and participation. They are subject to negative stereotyping. They lack equal opportunities for health care. Women are affected by poverty more than others. They suffer from violence and discrimination. These pressures are amplified in case of older women and women with disabilities.

The Arab Group stresses the need to intensify efforts for preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women in all parts of the world. We express our appreciation for the activities conducted by the relevant United Nations entities to this aim. The Group emphasizes the importance of empowering women through education and training in areas of public management, public policy, economics, information technology and science to ensure that they acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute fully and effectively in their societies.

Improving women's access to information and communication technology, including e-government tools contribute to the empowerment of women, in order to participate in various aspects of life. It also contributes to the elimination of negative stereotypes and enhancing the positive role of women in society.

The Group expresses its appreciation for the role played by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in leading the work of the United Nations system, in order to achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and supporting members' efforts in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

The Arab Group condemns the growing difficulties women face in the Arab territories occupied by Israel. The Group stresses the importance of the advancement of women in the occupied Arab territories in Palestine, the Syrian Golan, and the Shebaa Farms in Lebanon. The Group commends the existing cooperation between the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) through its fund for gender equality, and civil society organizations in the occupied Palestinian territories to achieve economic empowerment for Palestinian women, by developing women's cooperatives, training women on management and helping them identify business opportunities. We call for Ms. Bachelet, Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of the entity to pay increasing attention to the suffering of women under foreign occupation, and appoint a focal point to address their situation, in accordance with international law, international humanitarian law, and human rights law. The group also calls for the international community to provide all possible support to Palestinian women under occupation to enjoy all human rights, including the right to live in their own independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital.

In conclusion, the Arab Group expresses its appreciation for all Arab women who stood side by side with men to achieve equality, social justice, and democracy; and for their relentless pursuit for an effective participation in political, economic, social and cultural life. The Group emphasizes its support to the global cause of women and the legitimate pursuit for their empowerment, the advancement of their status, the preservation and expansion of their rights.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman